

Urges House Budget Committee to Protect American Taxpayers

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today continued his call to block the automatic pay raise members of Congress are set to receive in Fiscal Year 2011, which begins October 1, 2010.

Mitchell wrote the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, Rep. John Spratt, urging him to consider H.R. 4255, the Stop the Automatic Pay Raise for Members of Congress in FY2011 Act. The legislation was introduced by Reps. Mitchell and Ron Paul (R-TX) in December, and has gained broad bipartisan support from 130 co-sponsors, nearly a third of the members in the House. The National Taxpayers Union and Citizens Against Government Waste have also endorsed H.R. 4255.

"In these tough economic times, with so many families struggling to make ends meet, I believe it would be unconscionable for Congress to give itself a raise," Mitchell said. "Right now we need to focus to be on getting people back to work, shoring up the economy, and keeping our families and communities safe."

Yesterday, Reps. Mitchell and Paul circulated a letter to their House colleagues asking for their help to block the next scheduled pay raise. "With unemployment high and so many families under stress, we believe this is the wrong time for Congress to raise its own pay. However, this will happen in FY2011 unless Congress takes action to stop it," they wrote.

In 1989, Congress approved a process that provides lawmakers with an automatic pay raise every January unless they vote specifically to reject the raise.

Last year, Mitchell and Paul were successful in blocking the FY 2010 pay raise after introducing similar legislation, H.R. 156, which garnered 118 cosponsors. As a result, members of

Congress did not receive an anticipated \$4,700 raise in 2009, which has saved taxpayers approximately \$2.5 million. [Source: [The Hill](#) , February 24, 2009]

Mitchell and Paul also introduced legislation to block the FY2009 pay raise, which, despite gaining 34 bipartisan cosponsors, did not reach the floor of the House for a vote. Mitchell offered a similar bill in 2007, H.R. 2934, to block the FY2008 pay raise, which attracted 29 co-sponsors.

In 2008, when Mitchell received a pay raise over his objection, he donated his pay raise to Arizona charities. Mitchell did the same with his 2009 pay raise, and last month donated his pay raise to 17 local organizations, including the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Scottsdale, The Arizona Animal Welfare League and St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance. [Source: [The Arizona Republic](#) , March 10, 2010]

Below is the text of Congressman Mitchell's letter to Chairman Spratt:

April 16, 2010

The Honorable John Spratt
Chairman
House Budget Committee
207 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt:

As the Budget Committee considers the Fiscal Year 2011 budget, I urge you to protect American taxpayers by blocking the automatic pay raise for Members of Congress in FY 2011.

Mitchell Opposes Pay Raise in Federal Budget for Members of Congress

Friday, 16 April 2010 11:24

With unemployment high and so many families struggling to make ends meet, I believe this is simply the wrong time for Congress to raise its own pay. However, this will happen in FY2011 unless Congress takes action to stop it.

I urge you to consider H.R. 4255, the Stop the Automatic Pay Raise for Members of Congress in Fiscal Year 2011 Act, which I introduced with Rep. Ron Paul of Texas. This bill has broad bipartisan support, including 130 cosponsors.

As you recall, Rep. Paul and I introduced similar legislation last year, H.R. 156, to block the 2010 pay raise. After more than 100 bipartisan members signed onto the measure the pay raise was ultimately blocked.

Chief Justice Robert recently announced that, in a major break from tradition, he would not seek a salary increase this year for federal judges in light of the fact that "so many of our fellow citizens have been touched by hardship . . ."

Likewise, President Obama has also announced a pay freeze for senior White House officials, as well as top appointees across the federal government.

Congress should follow suit. The American people are not getting a raise this year. Neither should Congress.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Harry E. Mitchell
Member of Congress